TUS

Ollscoil Teicneolaíochta na Sionainne:
Lár Tíre, An tIarthar Láir

Technological University of the Shannon:
Midlands Midwest

TUS Procedures for Programmatic Review 2026 - 2031

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Contents

1.0 Purpose of the Procedures

This TUS Procedures for Programmatic Review (hereafter referred to as the Procedures) supports the TUS Policy for Programmatic Review[1] (hereafter referred to as the Policy). The Policy outlines the TUS approach to programmatic review and provides a framework to guide the process including the principles underpinning the programmatic review, the programmatic review process, and the critical self-study/self-evaluation at Faculty, Department and Programme levels. It also includes procedures for programme review outside of programmatic review.

This Procedures document accompanies the Policy and its purpose is to ensure that programmatic review is conducted in a consistent, transparent and effective manner. The document sets out the requirements for Faculties/Schools, Departments and Programme Boards in relation to the preparatory phase, including self-evaluation, the review process and post-review follow-up and implementation of actions arising from review recommendations. In doing so, it supports a structured and coherent approach to programmatic review in TUS, ensuring effective oversight, strategic alignment and the quality, relevance and continuous enhancement of academic provision.

2.0 Scope of the Programmatic Review Procedures

The procedures outlined in this document apply to all programmatic reviews in TUS, including for taught and research provision. As outlined in the Policy, the scope provides for two types of review:

1) Programmatic Review at Faculty-level;
2) Programme Review Outside of Programmatic Review.

The Procedures should be read in conjunction with the TUS Policy on Programmatic Review[1] and the *TUS Programme Design Guidelines*[2] as essential reference points. Additional key reference points in the *TUS Academic Quality Assurance and Enhancement Handbook* include:

1) TUS Policy for Taught Programme Validation and Modification[3]
2) TUS Policy and Procedures for Collaborative Provision (National and Transnational)[4]
3) TUS Research Policies and Procedures[5]
4) Putting Learning First: TUS Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy. [6]
5) TUS Graduate Attributes Framework[7]
6) TUS Student Placement Policy; [8]
7) TUS Guide to Writing and Using Learning Outcomes[9]

3.0 Initiation of Programmatic Review/Programme Review

3.1 Initiation of Programmatic Review

In accordance with the TUS Policy for Programmatic Review, programmatic review at TUS is a faculty/school-level activity with all Departments in a Faculty/School undergoing the process as part of a collective endeavor.

A schedule of programmatic review for the University shall be developed by the Office of the Vice President of Academic Affairs and Registrar, in consultation with Deans of Faculty. The schedule shall encompass the full cycle of academic reviews for all academic provision for a given cycle of programmatic review.

The schedule for programmatic review shall be agreed by the Senior Academic Management Group (SAMG).

The schedule encompassing the current cycle has been agreed by the SAMG and is available at: Programmatic Review Schedule.

The schedule may be subject to change to meet University requirements or for other operational or administrative reasons. Any proposed changes shall be agreed between the relevant Dean of Faculty/School and the Vice President Academic Affairs and Registrar and submitted to SAMG for approval. Changes to the schedule may require extension of the approval period of associated academic programmes by Academic Council and be dependent on the outcomes of such approval by Academic Council.

3.2 Initiation of Programme Review Outside of Programmatic Review

The requirement to initiate the review of a programme/programme suite outside of programmatic review should be evidenced by a clear rationale and may be identified by the relevant Programme Board, and/or Head of Department/Dean of Faculty/School. There may be a wide range of factors which would precipitate such a review, including but not limited to:

- strategic priorities of the University, Faculty or Department, including restructuring or repositioning of the programme(s) within the portfolio;
- significant changes in industry requirements, labour market demand and/or employment trends, including developments within the discipline, impacting the relevance of the programme and graduate outcomes;
- significant changes in student demand, including sustained declines in recruitment;

- issues relating to student performance or outcomes, such as retention, progression or completion rates;
- requirements to maintain Professional, Regulatory and Statutory Body (PRSB) accreditation or compliance with associated standards;
- findings from annual programme monitoring, including feedback from students, graduates and employers, and/or the cumulative impact of changes arising through annual modification processes;
- resource or staffing constraints, affecting the sustainable delivery of the programme;
- opportunities for significant enhancement, innovation or redevelopment, including new delivery modes or interdisciplinary provision.

The review of a programme/programme suites outside of programmatic review shall require the approval of Academic Council. In all cases, the relevant Dean of Faculty shall consult with the Vice President of Academic Affairs and Registrar prior to submission of a review request to Academic Council.

In accordance with the *TUS Policy for Programmatic Review*,[1] any programme/programme suite reviewed through this process will remain within the scope of the subsequent scheduled programmatic review and will participate in that programmatic review, notwithstanding the time interval between the two processes.

4.0 Procedures for Programmatic Review

There shall be four distinct phases to the programmatic review process:

1) Critical Self-study/Self-evaluation
2) Internal Review
3) External Review Panel Phase
4) Post Review Implementation

4.1 Critical Self-study/Self-evaluation Phase

The critical self-study/self-evaluation phase provides a structured opportunity for comprehensive and reflective evaluation of all Faculty/School and Departmental activity, including academic provision, supported by relevant evidence. The self-study process shall involve appropriate consultation with internal and external stakeholders, including students, graduates, staff, employers and professional bodies, *inter alia*, as relevant.

The self-study process shall be undertaken in accordance with, and take full account of, the Principles Applicable to the Programmatic Review set out in Section 4.0 of the *TUS Policy for Programmatic Review*.[1]

In accordance with the *TUS Policy for Programmatic Review,*[1] self-study is undertaken at the levels of Faculty/School, Department, and Programme/Programme Suite.

1) At Faculty/School level, a Faculty/School Critical Self-study shall be undertaken, taking account of the Objectives of the Faculty Critical Self-study/Guiding Questions set out in the Policy. A Faculty Critical Self-study Report, synthesising findings from the associated self-evaluation activities, shall be developed in accordance with the Reports Indicative Content also set out in the Policy.
2) At Department level, a Department Critical Self-study shall be undertaken, taking account of the Objectives of the Department Critical Self-study/Guiding Questions provided set out in the Policy. A Department Critical Self-study Report, synthesising findings from the associated self-evaluation activities, shall be developed in accordance with the Report's Indicative Content set out in the Policy.
3) At Programme/Programme Suite level, a self-evaluation shall be undertaken, reflecting on the Criteria for Programme/Programme Suite Self-evaluation as set out in the Policy. A Programme/Programme Suite Self-evaluation Report, synthesising findings from the associated self-evaluation activities, shall be developed in accordance with the Reports Indicative Content set out in the Policy.
4) A standard template for each self-study report shall be available from the Quality Office/Frequently Requested Academic Forms Section of the TUS Academic Council App.

4.1.1 Governance and Oversight Responsibilities

The relevant Dean of Faculty/School shall have overall responsibility for programmatic review, with the process coordinated at Faculty/School level. At their discretion, the Dean of Faculty/School may establish a Programmatic Review Steering Group to assist with the oversight, coordination and engagement.

Overall responsibility for the completion of the critical self-study/self-evaluation at each level shall rest with the appropriate lead. The Dean of Faculty/School will have responsibility for the Faculty Critical Self-study, while the Head of Department will have responsibility for the Department Critical Self-study. Programme Boards, in conjunction with the Head of Department, will have responsibility for the completion of Programme/Programme Suite Self-evaluation Reports and for developing revised programme specifications within Academic Module Manager. A representation of key oversight responsibilities is provided in Figure 1.

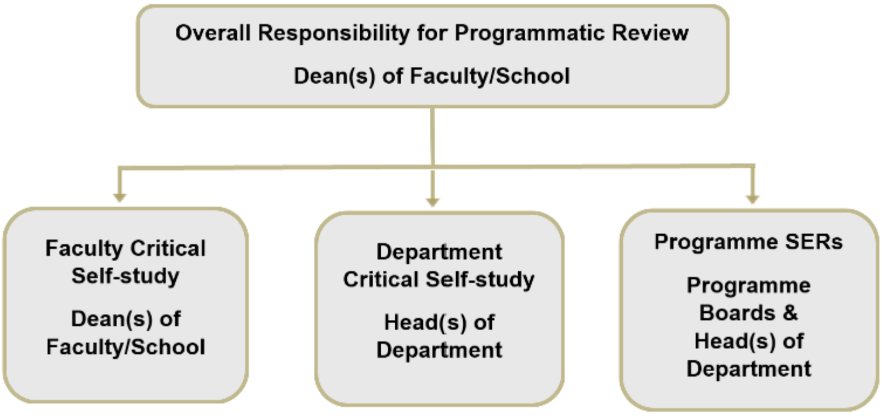

Figure 1. Representation of key oversight responsibilities for programmatic review in a Faculty/School.

4.1.2 Responsibilities of Professional Services in Supporting Programmatic Review

In the context of the unified operational model of TUS, Professional Services across the University shall support Faculties and Departments in the effective implementation of the programmatic review process. Professional Services shall contribute, as appropriate, to the provision of institutional data, operational oversight, specialist expertise and administrative support to Faculties/Schools, Departments, Programme Boards and review panels throughout the process. Relevant TUS Professional Services supporting the programmatic review may include, *inter alia*:

- Registry
- Quality
- Curriculum and Examinations
- Institutional Research and Data Analytics
- Centre for Pedagogical Innovation and Development (CPID)
- Careers and Employability
- Transitions and Student Success
- Research, Development and Innovation
- RUN-EU
- TUS Global and Alumni
- Marketing
- Corporate Services, Campus Services and Capital Development

4.1.3 Nature and Scope of Critical Self-study/Self-evaluation Activities

The specific critical self-study/self-evaluation activities will be determined by the relevant Faculty/School and should be appropriately tailored to the objectives at the relevant level and the nature and scope of the associated report. Typical activities, tailored for the relevant level, may include, but are not limited to:

- review of programme portfolio and academic provision at Faculty and Department levels, including disciplinary strengths, portfolio coherence, progression pathways, delivery modes and alignment with university strategy and regional relevance;
- collation and analysis of relevant quantitative and qualitative data, including demographic trends, programme demand, enrolment trends, student performance (retention, progression and completion), and graduate outcomes;
- review of teaching, learning and assessment practices, including pedagogical approaches, student engagement and assessment design;
- evaluation of research activity and academic capacity, including the contribution of research and scholarship to programme development and disciplinary positioning;
- consideration of quality assurance processes, including programme boards and feedback mechanisms;
- review of resources and supports, including staffing, facilities, digital infrastructure and learning supports;
- student and graduate consultation and feedback including student surveys, to inform evaluation of the student experience, programme relevance and graduate outcomes;
- external stakeholder consultation, involving industry and employers, professional bodies and other relevant stakeholders where applicable;
- internal stakeholder consultation, involving academic staff, corporate and professional services, to inform evaluation of programme delivery and support structures;
- review of quality assurance processes and documentation, including annual monitoring by programme boards, external examiner reports, and outcomes of accreditation reviews, where applicable;
- benchmarking and external referencing, where appropriate, against comparable programmes and developments within the discipline;
- identification of key strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, and associated strategic priorities, informed by the evaluation of evidence and stakeholder input.

4.1.4 Examples of Methods to Support Self-study

Typical methods to support data collection, stakeholder engagement, and self-study may include:

- student and graduate surveys, including bespoke surveys for programmatic review and university/national level surveys such as the National Survey of Student Engagement (StudentSurvey.ie)/Graduate Outcomes Survey;
- focus groups with students and/or graduates, to explore themes in greater depth;
- staff consultations or workshops, including Programme Board discussions;
- employer and industry consultation, including surveys, advisory boards, skills fora and targeted interviews with employers, professional bodies and other key stakeholders, where applicable;
- analysis of university datasets, including student performance and outcomes data;
- consideration of relevant reference points, including external examiner feedback accreditation/PRSB reports, and external benchmarking, where applicable;
- approaches such as SWOT analysis, to support reflection, and the identification of future development priorities and recommendations.

The TUS Guidelines for Conducting Focus Groups for Quality Assurance Processes may serve as a useful reference point.

4.1.5 Generating Revised Programme Specifications

The programmatic review process provides an opportunity to revise programmes, informed by the outcomes of self-evaluation. Programme Boards shall identify and implement any required revisions to programme design, structure, content or delivery arising from self-evaluation, with all modifications reflected in the updated programme specifications. The output of this process shall be updated Programme Specifications developed within Academic Module Manager, which shall accompany the Programme/Programme Suite Self-evaluation Reports as part of the re-validation process.

As a consequence of programme amendments during re-validation, an important inclusion in the Programme/Programme Suite SER is a comparative mapping of revisions across programmatic review periods. A Table is provided in the Programme SER Template to facilitate this and it enables programme/module changes across programmatic review periods. It is an essential tool for Faculties/Central Services in tracking student academic requirements across programmatic review cycles.

In addition, programmatic review may provide an opportunity for the development and validation of new programmes, where appropriate. In accordance with the provisions of the *TUS Policy for Programmatic Review*[1] the validation of new programmes is permissible "*where they fall within the broad disciplinary domain of the existing Faculty/School portfolio and align with Departmental academic provision, expertise and resource capacity*". This requires the approval of the relevant Head of Department/Dean of Faculty/School in consultation with the VP Academic Affairs and Registrar.

The Curriculum Office shall provide guidance and training to support Programme Boards and Departments in the development of revised programme specifications within Academic Module Manager.

4.1.6 Faculty/School-level Scrutiny of Documentation Prior to Submission

Prior to submission for the internal review panel phase, the Faculty/School shall undertake scrutiny of the self-study documentation to ensure that the self-study process has been undertaken in accordance with the principles of programmatic review and that the documentation reflects the objectives of programmatic review at Faculty, Department and Programme/Programme Suite levels. The approach to this scrutiny shall be determined by the relevant Dean of Faculty/School.

The scrutiny shall also consider the completeness, coherence and consistency of the outputs at each level, including the Faculty Critical Self-study Report, Department Critical Self-study Reports and Programme/Programme Suite Self-evaluation Reports, together with associated revised programme specifications.

The Deans of Faculty, in conjunction with Heads of Department, shall arrange for any amendments arising from this scrutiny to be addressed prior to submission of documentation.

4.1.7 Submission of Documentation for Review Phase

The Faculty/School shall submit the full suite of documentation to the Office of the Vice President Academic Affairs and Registrar to progress to the internal review panel phase. All documentation will be submitted in soft copy form at least four (4) weeks prior to the scheduled Internal Review Panel Visit, as follows.

1) documentation should be uploaded to the Microsoft SharePoint folder, clearly titled for the given Faculty/School.
2) the folder will contain a sub-folder for the three distinct levels, named as:
   a) Faculty Critical Self-study;
   b) Department Critical Self-study;
   c) Programme/Programme Suite Self Evaluation Reports and associated Programme Specifications.
3) The folder named Programme/Programme Suite Self Evaluation Reports should contain subfolders, for each distinct [named] Programme/Programme suite, each containing the associated SER and programme specifications.
3) File naming conventions should be clear and intuitive to assist panel members. It is recommended that programme specification files with programme code names (extracted from Academic Module Manager) are renamed to include the programme code and the programme title.
4) The Critical Self-study/Self-evaluation Reports shall be version-controlled by selecting the appropriate version control box on the Cover Page of templates provided.

4.2 Internal Review Panel Phase

The Internal Review Panel phase constitutes an internal peer review stage within the programmatic review process. An Internal Review Panel shall be convened on a Department-by-Department basis, with a separate panel established for each Department.

The purpose of the Internal Review Panel is to undertake an independent and objective evaluation of the self-study process and its outputs at Department and Programme/Programme Suite levels, ensuring alignment with the principles of programmatic review and the objectives of self-study.

The internal review panel shall focus primarily on the Department Critical Self-study Report and associated Programme/Programme Suite Self-evaluation Reports and Programme Specification documents. The Faculty Critical Self-study Report shall be provided as contextual documentation to inform the Panel's consideration.

The Internal Review Panel shall be chaired internally and will operate as a preparatory stage to ensure that documentation is robust, complete and ready for consideration by the External Review Panel. In this context, a full and complete suite of documentation should be submitted to internal panel for review.

4.2.1 Formation and Composition of Internal Review Panel

The Office of the Vice President Academic Affairs and Registrar shall be responsible for the appointment and constitution of the Internal Review Panel. The Panel shall comprise members with appropriate experience and expertise, including familiarity with current practice and developments in the relevant discipline(s), and with quality assurance processes in higher education.

a) The Internal Review Panel shall typically comprise at least six (6) persons including:
   1) a Chairperson (a TUS Assistant Registrar or their nominee);
   2) at least (1) internal academic (normally Dean of Faculty/School Head of Department) from Faculty/School(s) not involved in the programmatic review;
   3) at least one (1) experienced external academic (normally a Dean of Faculty/Head of Department) in the disciplinary area of the Faculty;
   4) one (1) external industry representative in the area of the proposed programme;
   5) one (1) experienced member of TUS functional areas such as CPID or Library

inter alia;

6) an enrolled or formerly enrolled student.

b) The internal and external academic membership, (2) and (3) above, may be expanded to reflect the disciplinary breadth of the Department, on the advice of the Dean of Faculty/School and Head of Department. However, the panel should typically not exceed eight (8) members.

c) The Chief Academic Officer and the Vice President Academic Affairs and Registrar shall be ex officio members of the Internal Review Panel and may attend meetings at their discretion.

d) A Secretary to the Internal Review Panel shall be appointed in consultation between the Assistant Registrar (Chairperson) and the Faculty/School.

Nominations for Panel membership may be proposed by the relevant Deans of Faculty/School, Heads of Department and Programme Boards. Proposers shall consult with prospective nominees in advance of nomination to confirm their willingness and availability to serve on the Panel. Due regard should be given to ensuring that panel independence, gender balance, experience profile, and the avoidance of conflicts of interest. Existing external examiners in the relevant Faculty/School are not eligible to be members of the internal review panel.

All nominations shall be submitted to the Office of the Vice President Academic Affairs and Registrar at the point of submission of documentation for the internal review phase.

4.2.2 The Internal Review Panel Meeting and Report

The Internal Review Panel shall be convened by the Office of the Vice President Academic Affairs and Registrar in consultation with the Dean of Faculty/School.

1) All documentation shall be issued to the panel at least two (2) weeks in advance of the review meeting.
2) The internal review panel shall normally be conducted in-person. A virtual meeting may be held at the discretion of the Vice President Academic Affairs and Registrar in consultation with the Dean of Faulty/School.
3) The Internal Review Panel shall use a typical Agenda, as set out in Appendix 1, which may be adapted as required.
4) The Chairperson shall ensure adherence to the agreed agenda and facilitate the effective conduct of proceedings.
5) In undertaking its work, the Internal Review Panel shall take account of:

a) the principles applicable to the programmatic review (Section 4.0 of the Policy);
b) the objectives of the critical self-study and self-evaluation of programmes. (Section 6.0 of the Policy);
c) the Validation Criteria for New TUS Awards as outlined in the *TUS Policy for Programme Validation/Modification*[3] (Appendix 2)

6) Following its deliberations in private session, the Panel may make recommendations to enhance the self-study documentation and revised programme specifications in advance of submission for external review.
7) At the conclusion of the meeting, the Chairperson shall provide an oral summary of high-level findings.
8) The Chairperson shall prepare a Report using the Template outlined in Appendix 3.
9) The Chairperson shall issue the report to the relevant Dean of the Faculty/School for issue to the Department and Programme Boards for their consideration. A copy shall also be issued to the Quality Office.

4.2.3 Consideration of the Internal Review Panel Report

The Faculty/Department/Programme Boards consider the Internal Review Panel Report and review the documentation accordingly.

1) The Head of Department issues the Internal Review Panel report to the relevant Programme Boards.
2) The Head of Department shall arrange for any necessary amendment to be made to the documentation in the context of the report and its recommendations, including:
    - Department Critical Self-study;
    - Programme/Programme Suite Self Evaluation Report;
    - Programme Specifications.
3) The Department prepares a response to the findings using the template provided in Appendix 4, and submits the response and associated revised documentation to the Dean of Faculty/School.
4) On consideration of the response, the relevant Faculty/School, submits a soft copy of the revised documentation (in the format specified in Section 4.1.6) to the Office of the Vice President Academic Affairs and Registrar's to support the conduct of the External Review Panel. This submission shall include confirmation that the Report of the Internal Review Panel has been fully considered.

4.3 External Review Panel Phase

The External Review Panel phase constitutes the formal independent peer review stage of the programmatic review process. External Review Panels shall be established to undertake an objective evaluation of the self-study process and its outputs, assessing the extent to which they demonstrate a coherent, evidence-informed and reflective assessment of activity, and to determine whether the outputs are robust, current and aligned with university strategy, award standards and relevant stakeholder and disciplinary expectations, as applicable, while providing recommendations in relation to the continued provision, development and enhancement of academic activity.

External Review Panel visits shall be conducted at both Faculty and Department levels, including:

a) a Faculty-level External Review Panel visit, focusing on the Faculty Critical Self-study Report and the strategic direction, organisation and development of the Faculty/School;

b) Department-level External Review Panel visits, conducted on a department-by-department basis, focusing on the Department Critical Self-study Reports and associated Programme/Programme Suite Self-evaluation Reports and Programme Specifications.

4.3.1 Formation and Composition of External Review Panel

The Office of the Vice President Academic Affairs and Registrar shall be responsible for the appointment and constitution of the External Review Panels. The Panels shall comprise members with appropriate experience and expertise, including familiarity with current practice and developments in the relevant discipline(s), and with quality assurance processes in higher education.

The typical Programmatic Review Panel includes representatives from academia, industry and employers, and an enrolled or graduate and shall be capable of making national and international comparisons with regard to the programmatic review and the specific suite of programmes.

a) The External Review Panels shall typically be constituted as follows:

<u>Faculty-level External Review Panel</u>

1) a Chairperson (a Registrar/Dean of Faculty, or another senior academic, familiar with Faculty Reviews and selected by the Vice President Academic Affairs and Registrar);

2) at least (1) experienced Academic Manager (normally a Dean of Faculty);
3) at least (1) experienced Professional Management Support Services Manager;
4) at least one (1) experienced external academic (senior Head of Department/Senior Lecturer) in the broad disciplinary areas of the Faculty;
5) two (2) representatives from industry/employers or professional bodies;
6) one (1) currently enrolled student representative.
7) one (1) graduate of a programme of the Faculty.

<u>Department-level External Review Panel</u>

1) a Chairperson (a Registrar/Dean of Faculty, or another senior academic, familiar with Faculty Reviews and selected by the Vice President Academic Affairs and Registrar);
2) at least two (2) experienced academics in the relevant fields of learning;
3) at least two (2) representatives from industry/employers or professional bodies;
4) one currently enrolled student representative.
5) one (1) graduate of a programme of the Department.

b) To ensure continuity and coherence across the external review process, the Chairperson of the Department-level External Review Panels shall be drawn from the Chairperson and/or senior external academic members of the Faculty-level External Review Panel. Where feasible, industry/employer and student/graduate representatives shall also participated in the departmental-level panels.
c) The membership of the panels may be expanded to reflect the disciplinary breadth of the Faculty/Department, on the advice of the Dean of Faculty/School and Head of Department. However, the panels should typically not exceed ten (10) members.
d) Normally each panel should contain at least one (1) member from a higher education institution outside The State.
e) The TUS Head of Quality, or their nominee, acts as Secretary to the External Review Panels.

Nominations for Panel membership may be proposed by the relevant Deans of Faculty/School, Heads of Department and Programme Boards. Proposers shall consult with prospective nominees in advance of nomination to confirm their willingness and availability to serve on the Panel. Due regard should be given to ensuring that panel independence, gender balance, experience profile, and the avoidance of conflicts of interest.

A candidate for membership of a Programmatic Review Panel who has served as an external examiner on programmes/modules in the Faculty/School, must have ended their external examinership at least two years before the programmatic review event.

All nominations shall be submitted to the Office of the Vice President Academic Affairs and Registrar together with the documentation for the external review phase.

4.3.2 Convening the External Review Panel Meetings

The External Review Panel shall be convened by the Office of the Vice President Academic Affairs and Registrar.

1) The Office of the Vice President Academic Affairs and Registrar in conjunction with the relevant Faculty/Department agrees a date for the external panels and for receipt by the Office of the associated documentation.
2) All documentation shall be issued to the panels at least three (3) weeks in advance of the review meetings. This shall include:
   a) meeting agenda;
   b) a Conflict of Interest declaration (Appendix 5);
   c) soft copies of documentation as outlined in Section 4.1.6
   d) TUS Policy and Procedures for Programmatic Review;
   e) any additional relevant information provided by the Faculty/Department.
3) The external review panels shall normally be conducted in person. In exceptional circumstances, a virtual meeting may be held at the discretion of the Vice President Academic Affairs and Registrar in consultation with the Dean of Faulty/School.
4) The Chairpersons shall convene the meeting(s), ensure adherence to the agreed agenda and facilitate the effective conduct of proceedings.
5) The Faculty-level External Review Panel shall use the typical agenda set out in Appendix 6. In undertaking its work, the Faculty-level External Review Panel shall take account of:
   a) the principles applicable to the programmatic review as set out in Section 4.0 of the Policy);
   b) the objectives of the Faculty Critical Self-study as outlined in Section 6.0 of the Policy;
   c) the Faculty Critical Self-study report;
   d) discussion held during the programmatic review visit with relevant stakeholders;
6) Following its deliberations in private session, the Panel may make

recommendations to support the strategic enhancement and future development of the Faculty/School in alignment with university strategy and priorities.

7) At the conclusion of the meeting, the Chairperson shall provide an oral summary of high-level findings.
8) The Chairperson shall prepare a Report using the Template provided in Appendix 7.
9) The Department-level External Review Panel shall use the typical agenda set out in Appendix 4. In undertaking its work, the Department-level External Review Panel shall take account of:
   a) the principles applicable to the programmatic review (Section 4.0 of the Policy);
   b) the objectives of the Department Critical Self-study and Self-evaluation of programmes (Section 6.0 of the Policy);
   c) the Validation Criteria for TUS Awards as outlined in the TUS Policy for Programme Validation/Modification (Appendix 2);
   d) the Department Critical Self-study report;
   e) the Programme/Programme Suite Self-evaluation Reports and revised Programme Specifications;
   f) discussions held during the programmatic review visit with relevant stakeholders.
10) Following its deliberations in private session, the Panel may:
   a) make recommendations to the Department to support the enhancement and future development of academic activity within the Department;
   b) recommend to Academic Council the approval of the revised programme(s) without modification;
   c) recommend to Academic Council the approval of the revised programme(s) subject to Condition(s) and/or Recommendations;
   d) recommend not to approve the revised programme(s) and request resubmission of a revised programme proposal to the same re-validation panel.
11) At the conclusion of the meeting, the Chairperson shall provide an oral summary of high-level findings.
12) The Chairperson shall prepare a Report using the Template set out in Appendix 3) and submit the agreed report to the TUS Head of Quality.

4.4 Response to External Review Panel Reports

1) The Head of Quality issues the External Review Panel Reports to the Dean(s) of

Faculty for issue to the relevant Head(s) of Department and Programme Boards for their consideration.

2) The Faculty prepares a response to the Faculty-level Report using the template provided in Appendix 8.
    a) The Faculty Response is submitted to the Senior Academic Management Group for consideration, within 5 months of the review visit. It is also submitted to Academic Council for noting.
    b) A follow-up report is submitted one year after the review visit profiling progress related to ongoing actions in response to panel recommendations.
3) The Department prepares a response to the Department-level Report using the template provided in Appendix 4.
    a) if the report sets conditions and/or makes recommendations requiring the programme(s) to be modified, the Head of Department arranges for Programme Boards to be reconvened and additional work to be carried out in response to the findings of the re-validation process.
    b) All changes to programme documents as a result of addressing condition(s) and/or recommendation(s) should be referenced in the response form TP0X.
    c) The Department Response, together with revised Programme Specification Documents, should be submitted in soft copy to the Office of Vice President Academic affairs and Registrar.
    d) The response to the External Validation Panel Report is considered by the Taught Programme Provision subcommittee of Academic Council.
    e) The Subcommittee notifies the subsequent Academic Council that a satisfactory response to the External Panel Report has been received and a Final Programme Document has been created. If required, the subcommittee brings any matters of note to Academic Council.
    f) On noting the satisfactory response, Academic Council approves the re-validated Programmes for awards of the Technological University.
    g) The Office of Vice President Academic Affairs and Registrar prepares a Certificates of Programme Approval which are retained in the Office of Registrar and available upon request.
    h) The Head of Department, in conjunction with Dean of Faculty/School, shall ensure that required details about the new programmes are included in the relevant prospectus, public advertisements, and other publications.
    i) When a programme does not receive approval, it may not proceed.

j) The Programme Coordinators shall send the approved programmes for upload to Banner in Academic Module Manager.

k) The Curriculum Office shall include the Validated Programme(s) in the subsequent listing provided to the QQI, Irish Register of Qualifications (IRQ).

4.4.1 Implementation of Approved Programmes

An implementation plan should be prepared by the Dean of the Faculty/School, Head of Department and Programme Boards to implement the re-validated programmes. Implementation may be on a phased basis for some or all of the programmes in a department, in consultation with the Office of the VP AAR and other relevant University Offices.

Where a department chooses to phase in the implementation of a programmatic review, an Interim Approved Programme Schedule should be developed. This serves as a temporary, short term schedule that facilitates a smooth transition for students from the old APS to the newly reviewed APS during the phased in period.

5.0 Procedures for Programme Review

In accordance with the *TUS Policy for Programmatic Review,* the review of an individual programme or programme suite may be initiated outside of the scheduled programmatic review cycle where justified by a clear rationale, as outlined in Section 7.0 of the Policy and Section 3.2 of these procedures.

Where a programme review is undertaken outside of programmatic review, the process shall be consistent, as far as practicable, with the principles and processes set out in this document.

The review shall involve the preparation of a Programme/Programme Suite Self-evaluation Report (SER), informed by appropriate evidence and stakeholder engagement. The outputs of such reviews shall be subject to the same governance, approval and reporting arrangements as those arising from programmatic review, ensuring consistency and quality of outcomes. The process shall follow the relevant stages outlined in these Procedures, including:

- self-evaluation and development of self-evaluation report and revised programme specifications
- internal review, undertaken through an Internal Review Panel;

- external review, undertaken through an External Review Panel;
- consideration of responses to conditions(s) and/or recommendation by the Department/Programme Board;
- reporting to Academic Council subcommittee and Academic Council and approval of re-validated programme by Academic Council.

References

1) TUS Policy for Programmatic Review
2) TUS Programme Design Guidelines
3) TUS Policy for Taught Programme Validation and Modification
4) TUS Policy and Procedures for Collaborative Provision (National and Transnational)
5) TUS Research Policies and Procedures
6) Putting Learning First: TUS Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy
7) TUS Graduate Attributes Framework
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9) TUS Guide to Writing and Using Learning Outcomes

Appendices

Appendix 1. Validation Criteria for New TUS Awards

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Appendix 1. Typical Agenda for an Internal Review Panel for Programmatic Review

[Faculty Title]

[Department Title]

[Date]

- The following is an indicative agenda for an Internal Panel for Programmatic Review.
- Following consultation between the Faculty/Office of VP Academic Affairs and Registrar, the agenda may be adjusted depending on the specific context of the Department, to reflect any particular requirements.

Time	Meeting	Discussion Topics	Typical Attendees
TBC	**Private Meeting of Panel**	• Outline of Initial Views • Preparation for Panel Meetings	• Panel Members
TBC	**Meeting of Panel with Management Team**	• Department Critical Self-study	• Dean of Faculty/School • Head of Department • Programme Leader(s)
	Meeting of Panel with Programme Team(s)	• Programme/Programme Suite Self-evaluation Reports	• Head of Department • Programme Leader(s) • Programme Team
TBC	**Meeting of Panel with Programme Team(s)**	<u>Programme Specifications</u> • Access, Transfer & Progression • Programme Structure • Programme Learning Outcomes • Teaching, Learning & Assessment Strategy • Review of Programme Schedules	• Head of Department • Programme Leader • Programme Team Relevant TUS Staff
	Lunch		
	Meeting of Panel with Programme Team(s)	<u>Module Descriptors</u> • Module Learning Outcomes • Indicative Syllabus Content • Assessment/Repeat Assessment Strategy • Module Resources	• Head of Department • Programme Leader • Programme Team • Relevant TUS Staff
TBC	**Private Meeting of Panel**	• Review of Meeting Minutes • Discussion and Consideration of Findings • Formulation of Findings.	• Panel Members
TBC	**Final Meeting with Management**	• Oral Presentation of Summary Findings.	• Head of School/Faculty • Head of Department • Programme Leader

Appendix 2. Validation Criteria for TUS Awards

TUS's validation processes for taught programmes are guided by the following explicit validation criteria. A taught programme shall be developed and assessed against these validation criteria during the phases of development and self-assessment in addition to the external validation assessment. These validation criteria are reproduced here from the *TUS Policy on Programme Validation and Modification* and are as follows:

1. The programme is consistent with the TUS strategy and meets authentic education and training needs;
2. The rationale for the programme is well informed, justified, and uses an evidence base to illustrate demand;
3. There is an appropriate emphasis on access, transfer and progression including due consideration for the provision of embedded (exit) awards/add-on awards as appropriate.
4. The programme aims and learning outcomes are clear, align with the proposed award title and are specified in a manner consistent with the relevant TUS Awards Standards.
5. The standards of knowledge, skills and competencies are appropriately articulated.
6. The design of the programme should enable its target learners to attain the minimum intended programme learning outcomes reliably and efficiently (in terms of learner effort).
7. The teaching and learning strategy is well planned, appropriate for the discipline area and type of award, and aligns with the *TUS Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy and* TUS Graduate Attributes Framework.
8. Assessment techniques are valid, fair and consistent and provide for the verification of the attainment of the intended learning outcomes and academic standard by students.
9. The programme is viable and contains adequate and appropriate reference to required resources to support the teaching, learning and assessment strategy for the programme.
10. The mode of delivery is consistent with the needs of the intended students of the programme and accessible and appropriate support services for students are provided for.

Appendix 3. Typical Content for an Internal/Department-level External Programmatic Review Panel Report

<u>*Note*</u>

The Internal Review/External Validation Panel Report will typically include the following contents. The report may be adjusted to reflect particular panel requirements.

Proposing Faculty/School	Faculty/School of XX
Department	Department of XX

Award and Programme Titles (NFQ Level) and (ECTS Credits)	*Notes:*
	• *Include all programmes presented for Re-validation.*
	• *Include full award and programme title as per Module manager document*
	• *Tabulate the following information for each award*
	  - *Award Title*
	  - *NFQ Level*
	  - *ECTS Credits*
	  - *Delivery Mode*
	  - *Proposed Start Date*
	  - *Duration*

Type & Date of Panel	☐ Internal Panel ☐ External Panel Date of Panel: ____/__/____
Panel Membership	
Management & Programme Team	
Validation Meeting Agenda/Summary	
Main Findings	*Include commentary as appropriate*
Commendations	1. Xx 2. Xx

	3. Xx
Conditions (Note: Only applicable to External Validation Panels	1. Xx
Recommendations	1. Xx 2. Xx 3.
Chairperson Signature	
Date	____/__/____

Appendix 4. Template for Department Response to an Internal/Department-level External Programmatic Review Panel Report

Faculty/School	Faculty/School of
Department	Department of
Type of Panel	☐ Internal Panel ☐ External Panel Date of Panel: ____/__/____
Award and Programme Titles/ NFQ Level and ECTS Credits	*Include all programmes presented for Re-validation* *(Note: This may be copied from the Programmatic Review Panel Report)*

Commendations	
Panel Finding	**Programme Board Response**
Commendations	*Insert Collective Response to all Commendations*

Conditions

Panel Finding	Programme Board Response	Completed or Ongoing
Insert Condition 1	*Insert Response (Status of Implementation/Progress Report)*	
Insert Condition 2	*Insert Response (Status of Implementation/Progress Report)*	
	Insert rows as required	

Recommendations		
Panel Finding	**Programme Board Response**	**Completed or Ongoing**
Insert Recommendation 1	*Insert Response (Status of Implementation/Progress Report)*	
Insert Recommendation 2	*Insert Response (Status of Implementation/Progress Report)*	
	Insert rows as required	

Signed on Behalf of Programme Board	Date____/__/____

Appendix 5. External Panel Member Conflict of Interest Declaration [1]

Purpose

TUS requires all panel members to declare any actual or potential conflicts of interest to ensure the integrity and impartiality of programme validation processes.

Conflict of Interest

Panel Member Name	
Affiliation/Institution	
Programme Undergoing Validation	

Please tick one of the following as relevant

☐ I confirm that I have no known conflicts of interest in relation to this proposed programmatic review.

☐ I declare the following actual/potential conflict(s) of interest:

Participation Publication Consent

TUS publishes Validation Reports on the TUS website in accordance with the TUS Policy on Programme Validation and Modification, including the names and affiliation of panel members.

☐ I consent to the publication of my name and affiliation in the list of assessors within the external panel report.

Signature	Date____/__/____

[1] This Conflict of Interest Form shall be issued to potential external panel members as an MS Form.

Appendix 6. Typical Agenda for a Faculty-level External Review Panel

[Faculty Title]
[Department Title]
[Date]

- The following is an indicative agenda. Following consultation between the Faculty/Office of VP Academic Affairs and Registrar, the agenda may be adjusted depending on the specific context of the Faculty, to reflect any particular requirements.

Time	Meeting	Discussion Topics	Typical Attendees
TBC	**Private Meeting of Panel**	• Outline of Initial Views • Preparation for Panel Meetings	• Panel Members
TBC	**Meeting of Panel with University Management**	• Welcome of the Panel • University Strategic Context • Introduction to Faculty & Programmatic Review	• President • CAO • VP's • Dean(s) of Faculty/School
TBC	**Faculty Critical Self Study 1**	• Methodology • Approach to the Self-Study • Faculty Critical Self-study - Introduction to the Faculty/School and Alignment with University Strategy - Faculty Strategic Direction and Positioning - Faculty/School Organisational Structure, Governance and Management - Disciplinary/Interdisciplinary Profile of Programme Portfolio (Faculty-level Overview)	• Dean(s) of Faculty/School • Heads of Department • Programme Leaders • Other Academic & Professional Management Services Staff identified by Deans of Faculty/School
	Break		
TBC		• Student Profile and Entry Routes (Faculty-level Overview) • Research Profile and Areas of Activity (Faculty-level Overview) • Teaching, Learning, and Assessment Strategy (Faculty-level Perspective)	• Dean(s) of Faculty/School • Heads of Department • Programme Leaders Other Academic & Professional Management Services Staff identified by Deans of Faculty/School
	Lunch		
TBC	**Tour of Physical Facilities**	• Infrastructure & Physical Facilities	• Dean(s) of Faculty/School • Heads of Department • Programme Leaders Other Academic & Professional Management Services Staff identified by Deans of Faculty/School

		• Human Capital and Staff Development • Facilities, Infrastructure, Learning Resources, and Student Supports (Faculty-level Overview) • External Engagement and Partnerships	• Dean(s) of Faculty/School • Heads of Department • Programme Leaders • Other Academic & Professional Management Services Staff identified by Deans of Faculty/School
TBC	**Private Meeting of Panel**		
TBC	**Final Meeting with Management**	• Oral Presentation of Summary Findings	• President • CAO • VP's • Dean(s) of Faculty/School • Heads of Department

Appendix 7. Typical Content of a Faculty-level External Review Panel Report

Note

The Faculty-level Panel Report will typically include the following contents. The report may be adjusted to reflect particular panel requirements.

Faculty/School	Faculty/School of XX
Type & Date of Panel	☐ Internal Panel ☐ External Panel Date of Panel: ____/__/____
Panel Membership	
Management & Programme Team	
Validation Meeting Agenda/Summary	
Relevant Commentary on Critical-self Study	
Commendations	1. Xx 2. Xx 3. Xx
Recommendations	1. Xx 2. Xx 3.
Chairperson Signature	
Date	____/__/____

TUS

Appendix 8. Response to a Faculty-level External Review Panel Report/Faculty Quality Improvement Plan

Appendix 4. Template for Department Response to an Internal/Department-level External Programmatic Review Panel Report

Proposing Faculty/School	Faculty/School of
Date of Panel	____/__/____

Overall Response to Panel Findings

Commendations	
Panel Finding	**Programme Board Response**
Commendations	*Insert Collective Response to all Commendations*

Recommendations			
Panel Finding	**Faculty/School Response**	**Completed or Ongoing**	**Target Date for Completion**
Insert Recommendation 1	*Insert Response (Status of Implementation/Progress Report)*		
Insert Recommendation 2	*Insert Response (Status of Implementation/Progress Report)*		
	Insert rows as required		

Signed Dean(s) of Faculty		Date____/__/____

Appendix 9. Typical Agenda for a Department-level External Review Panel

- The following is an indicative agenda. Following consultation between the Faculty/Office of VP Academic Affairs and Registrar, the agenda may be adjusted depending on the specific context of the Department, to reflect any particular requirements.
- The final schedule may require breakout sessions during the Programmatic Review event. The timing and structure will reflect the complexity involved.
- The schedule may also include mid-point private meetings for the panel.

[Faculty Title]

[Department Title]

[Date]

Time	Meeting	Discussion Topics	Typical Attendees
TBC	**Private Meeting of Panel**	• Outline of Initial Views • Preparation for Panel Meetings	• Panel Members
TBC	**Meeting of Panel with Senior Management Team**	• Department Critical Self-study	• Dean of Faculty/School • Head of Department • Programme Leader(s)
	Meeting of Panel with Programme Team(s)	• Programme/Programme Suite Self-evaluation Reports	• Head of Department • Programme Leader(s) • Programme Team
TBC	**Meeting of Panel with Programme Team(s)**	Programme Specifications • Access, Transfer & Progression • Programme Structure • Programme Learning Outcomes • Teaching, Learning & Assessment Strategy • Review of Programme Schedules	• Head of Department • Programme Leader • Programme Team • Relevant TUS Staff
	Lunch		
	Meeting with Employers/Industry and Alumni Representatives	• Stakeholder perspectives	• Panel Members
	Meeting with Students	• Student Experience	• Panel Members
	Meeting of Panel with Programme Team(s)	Module Descriptors • Module Learning Outcomes • Indicative Syllabus Content • Assessment/Repeat Assessment Strategy • Module Resources	• Head of Department • Programme Leader • Programme Team • Relevant TUS Staff
TBC	**Private Meeting of Panel**	• Review of Meeting Minutes • Discussion and Consideration of Findings • Formulation of Findings.	• Panel Members
TBC	**Final Meeting with Senior Management**	• Oral Presentation of Summary Findings.	• Senior Management